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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The California State Department of Public Health receives many inquiries from all parts of the Country covering a wide variety of subjects that are related to public health. Following are some of the typical questions that are received, together with the type of answers that are generally provided.

**QUESTION:** *I have been told that the use of aluminum cooking utensils produces cancer and intestinal disorders. Can you advise me if this is a fact, as I do not desire to use aluminum cooking utensils if they are detrimental to health?*

**ANSWER:** Many scientific investigations have been made into the use of aluminum cooking utensils and their possible effect upon health, but no reliable data have been developed anywhere to indicate that there is any danger to health in the use of aluminum cooking utensils. The American Medical Association has reported that there is no scientific evidence that the use of such utensils is harmful. The United States Public Health Service has reported that it is not acquainted with any trustworthy data which indicate that any disease bears a relation to the use of aluminum cooking utensils. The American Society for the Control of Cancer has stated, "Food and diet apparently have no relation to the cause of cancer. Neither does aluminum nor any other kind of cooking utensils have any connection with it." The British Ministry of Health has reported, "There is no convincing evidence that aluminum in the amounts in which it is likely to be consumed as the result of using aluminum utensils has a harmful effect upon the ordinary consumer. It is possible that there may be individuals who are susceptible to even such small doses of aluminum as may be derived from aluminum utensils but

evidence of this is inconclusive." Many State departments of health have reached similar conclusions as well as Federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Bureau of Standards. It may, therefore, be stated definitely that there is no scientific evidence whatsoever that would substantiate claims relative to any injurious effects upon health that may be caused through the use of aluminum cooking utensils.

**QUESTION:** *Is it safe to store canned food in the same can after it has been opened?*

**ANSWER:** Food products may be kept in the same can in which the product was packed provided that it is stored at a low temperature. It makes no difference whether the product is kept in the original container or removed to another container. The material used in the manufacture of the can does not cause food spoilage. Any canned food will, of course, spoil if not kept at a low temperature. Spoilage is due to fermentation and bacterial contamination. The metal used in the manufacture of the can and the coating that may be placed over the metal do not affect the quality or condition of the food in any way whatsoever.

**QUESTION:** *A bacteriological examination of water from a storage tank on our ranch shows the presence of *B. coli*. Does this mean that the water is unsafe to drink?*

**ANSWER:** The presence of *B. coli* in a tank of standing water indicates the presence of some sort of excrement. It might be from birds, bats, rats, mice, or any other animal or bird that might gain access to the tank. The mere presence of *B. coli* does not indicate

that the water might produce disease in a human being. The only danger in a contaminated water supply lies in contamination by human sewage. The presence of *B. coli* can be eliminated in a case such as that cited by covering the tank and screening it to prevent the entrance of birds, rodents or other animals.

**QUESTION:** *Difficulty has been experienced in purchasing garden fertilizers. Is it safe to use the effluent from a septic tank to irrigate a vegetable garden?*

**ANSWER:** Effluents from septic tanks or other settling tanks shall not be used to water any growing vegetable, garden truck, berries or low growing fruits, such as the fruit that is in contact with the ground, or to water vineyards or orchard crops during seasons in which the windfalls, or fruit, lie on the ground. This is in accordance with regulations of the California State Board of Public Health. On the other hand, nursery stock, cotton and such field crops as hay, grain, rice, alfalfa, fodder corn, cow beets and fodder carrots may be used with such sewage effluents provided that no milch cows are pastured on the land while it is moist with sewage, or have access to ditches carrying such sewage.

**QUESTION:** *What is meant by the term, "Food Poisoning"? How can any ordinary foodstuff poison anyone?*

**ANSWER:** The California State Department of Public Health has defined "Food Poisoning" as follows:

1. The occasional cases of poisoning from organic poisons present in normal animal and plant tissues (for example, poisonous mushrooms, fish and muscles).
2. The more or less injurious consequences following the consumption of food into which mineral or organic poisons (for example, arsenic, lead, tin, preservatives, etc.) have been introduced by accident or with intent to improve appearances or keeping quality.
3. Cases of infection due to swallowing bacteria and other parasites which infest or contaminate certain foods.
4. Poisoning due to deleterious substances produced in food by the growth of bacteria, molds or similar organisms.

**QUESTION:** *Do people suffer from hay fever in California? Is there any portion of the State where I may be assured of not suffering from this malady?*

**ANSWER:** Hay fever is a broad and general term to describe a very common condition. The hay fever of the middlewestern and eastern States, caused by the pollen of the common ragweed, is practically unknown

in California for the reason that this type of weed is of no importance in this State. The giant ragweed is found to a limited extent but its pollen is very coarse and seldom produces symptoms of hay fever in anyone. Probably more maladies with symptoms of hay fever prevail in California during the late spring and early summer than at other seasons of the year because more plants are in bloom at this season and, therefore, the air is filled with more pollens of a wide variety than at any other time of year. Certain people are susceptible to certain pollens and when they are prevalent there may be suffering from the group of symptoms that is commonly called "hay fever." The coastal regions of California provide relief for many persons who suffer from symptoms of hay fever.

**QUESTION:** *Members of my family suffer from sinus trouble. Is there any locality in California where they will be free from this condition?*

**ANSWER:** Some people suffering from sinus trouble find relief in the warm, dry, desert-like climate found in the southeastern portion of the State. Others can live comfortably at moderate elevations from 2,000 to 2,500 feet. It all depends upon the individual case. It is impossible to state that anyone will find relief from sinus trouble in any locality in California. Each case of sinus trouble must be considered a problem unique to the individual who suffers from it. If a change of climate is indicated, only the attending physician is fitted to give proper advice to cover the individual case.

**QUESTION:** *We intend to open a general hospital. Is it necessary to secure a license from the State in order to operate such an institution?*

**ANSWER:** There is no provision in the State law for licensing a general hospital. Maternity homes and hospitals, however, must be inspected and licensed by the State Department of Public Health. Hospitals and institutions that care for cases of tuberculosis must also be inspected by the State department and must conform to minimal regulations established by the department. The State Department of Institutions has a certain control over places where persons suffering from mental diseases receive care and treatment. Most cities, however, have ordinances that cover the construction and equipment of hospitals where general diseases are treated.

**QUESTION:** *We have a number of rabbits which we raise for the purpose of adding to our food supply. Is there any danger of contracting tularemia in killing and skinning such rabbits?*

**ANSWER:** There is no record of tularemia ever having been contracted from domestic rabbits. The most

important source of tularemia, however, is found in wild rabbits and it is never safe to handle or skin wild rabbits without using rubber gloves and exercising precaution against infecting the hands and particularly the eyes, lest tularemia be contracted. Any wild rabbit, whether cottontail or jack rabbit, may be suspected as a source of tularemia. The disease is demonstrated frequently in other rodents such as ground squirrels and sometimes in rats. It is primarily, however, a disease of wild rabbits.

**QUESTION:** *Is rabies more prevalent during the so-called "dog days" of August?*

**ANSWER:** As a matter of fact, rabies is generally more prevalent at other seasons of the year than during the so-called "dog days." Climatic factors, such as temperature and humidity, play no part whatsoever in the rise and fall of rabies. The transmission of the disease depends entirely upon inoculation through the bite of animals that suffer from the disease.

**QUESTION:** *Do any animals other than dogs suffer from rabies?*

**ANSWER:** It is considered by some authorities that the primary reservoir of rabies is in wild carnivorous animals such as coyotes. In civilized communities, however, dogs constitute the greatest reservoir for this disease. It may be contracted by any mammal, however. Domestic animals, such as cows, horses, pigs, and sheep frequently contract the disease through contact with dogs and coyotes. It is also found in skunks, wild-cats, ground squirrels, tree squirrels, goats, domestic cats and many other animals.

**QUESTION:** *Is it true that rabies in a human being is an incurable disease?*

**ANSWER:** There is no record of any individual who contracted rabies ever having recovered. It is one of the few diseases that is one hundred per cent fatal. The only treatment for rabies is preventive treatment. Persons who have been bitten by rabid animals should receive the anti-rabic vaccine without delay. Furthermore, wounds caused by bites from animals suspected of rabies should be cauterized immediately, using fuming nitric acid which is the only proven dependable agent for destroying the virus at the site of injection. Bites on the face and other areas close to the central nervous system are particularly dangerous and there should be no delay whatsoever in the cauterization of wounds on these important areas.

**QUESTION:** *How far from an open privy vault must a well be drilled for assuring the safety of the water?*

**ANSWER:** There is no rule that would cover the distance that a well for domestic supply should be drilled from any deposit of raw sewage. Character of the soil, underground gravity flow, and other factors must be considered. Raw domestic sewage should be deposited only in a septic tank in order that the direction of flow for the effluent and its final deposit may be determined definitely. All sources of domestic water supply should be placed away from the effluent so that there will be no opportunity for its entrance into the water supply.

**QUESTION:** *Is there any State law that determines how far a chicken yard must be placed from a neighbor's premises?*

**ANSWER:** Sections 17816 and 17817 of the Health and Safety Code prohibit keeping a horse, cow, calf, swine, sheep, goat, rabbit, or mule, or a chicken, pigeon, goose, duck, or other poultry in any part of any dwelling, apartment house or hotel. Neither any such animal nor poultry nor any stable shall be kept or maintained within 20 feet of any window or door of an apartment house or hotel. Many cities and counties have local ordinances that prohibit keeping any such animals or poultry within greater distances from any dwelling house.

**QUESTION:** *I wish to scatter the ashes of a dead body over the waters of San Francisco Bay. Is it necessary to obtain a permit for this purpose?*

**ANSWER:** Section 10475 of the Health and Safety Code provides that in issuing a burial or removal permit, the name of the cemetery where the remains shall be interred must be specified. Section 7501 of the same code provides that a permit to remove remains from any cemetery must specify the name of the cemetery where the remains will finally be interred. Both of these sections were so amended by the Legislature in 1941 and the Attorney General has ruled that under this law human cremated remains must be interred in a cemetery. This, in effect, prohibits the scattering of human ashes anywhere in California—over the land or over the sea.

**QUESTION:** *I was naturalized 10 years ago and at that time my name was changed under court order. I desire to have my children, born more than 10 years ago, registered under the name that I have acquired through naturalization. Is it possible to effect this change?*

**ANSWER:** The Attorney General has ruled that if the name of the child on the birth certificate was the legal name at the time the event occurred, it is impossible to effect a change. Affidavits may be filed in which

it is stated that the name of the father has been changed by law and that the child is now known under his name. This affidavit is filed behind the original certificate and becomes a part of the original document. As a matter of fact, no changes can be made whatsoever on any birth, death, or marriage certificate as it was originally filed. Any correction of facts on the certificates can be made by affidavit, which is filed with the original certificate with a note of the fact of the amendment with its date, placed on the margin of the otherwise unaltered original certificate.

*QUESTION: We plan to adopt an infant. Is it possible to secure a new birth certificate in which the names of the foster parents shall appear as the natural parents?*

ANSWER: The Health and Safety Code, Sections 10250 to 10254, provides that a new birth certificate as desired may be issued if the birth was originally registered in this State. A certificate of adoption is issued by the clerk of the court in which the adoption proceedings took place. The new birth certificate is based upon the certificate of adoption and the original birth certificate. Certificates of adoption from courts in other States and territories of the United States are acceptable but new birth certificates can be issued only if the original birth record was filed in California at the time of the occurrence of the event.

*QUESTION: I am more than 65 years of age and am without funds. I desire to apply for an old age pension but am unable to provide a birth certificate. Is there any way by which my birth may be registered at the present time?*

ANSWER: It is very difficult for individuals in the more advanced age groups to comply with the provisions of the Delayed Birth Registration Law enacted in 1943. Since such individuals are unable to provide affidavits from parents or attending physicians or from blood relatives who are older than the applicant, and the required documentary evidence is generally unobtainable, proof of age must be made by some other method. In many such cases it is possible to establish fact of birth in a superior court but some expense is involved in this procedure. Applicants for old age pensions should follow the instructions of the State Department of Social Welfare in their efforts to prove age and place of birth.

*QUESTION: Is it illegal to register a birth as illegitimate in California?*

ANSWER: There is no provision on the California birth certificate for any data pertaining to legitimacy. There is no specific statute that prohibits the use of the

term on the certificate, but the law makes no provision for its inclusion and, therefore, it is illegal to designate illegitimacy on any birth certificate filed in California.

*QUESTION: In registering a birth that occurred out of wedlock, should the child be given the name of the mother or the name of the father?*

ANSWER: Since the mother was not married, the name of the father can not be used legally as the mother has no legal right to the use of his name. It is customary in such cases for the child to be given the same surname as the mother. Of course, this makes the record appear that the child was born illegitimately but the word, "illegitimate," can not be used on the certificate.

*QUESTION: Is there any provision for the use of dead bodies for scientific purposes?*

ANSWER: The Health and Safety Code provides that unclaimed dead may be retained by the State Department of Public Health for scientific or educational purposes and that they shall be embalmed and disposed of in accordance with instructions of the department. They shall be held for 30 days by those to whom they have been assigned for scientific or educational purposes, subject to claim and identification by any authenticated relative of the decedent for purpose of interment or other disposition in accordance with the directions of the relative. For the assignment of unclaimed dead bodies to educational institutions for scientific study, the department has appointed two curators of the dead, one in San Francisco and the other in Los Angeles, to whom applications for such dead bodies are made.

*QUESTION: If the parents of a child born illegitimately marry after the birth of the child, may a new birth certificate be issued to supplant the original?*

ANSWER: Sections 10275 to 10279 of the Health and Safety Code make such provision. Both parents must file affidavits of the fact with the State Registrar of Vital Statistics upon a form provided for that purpose. These affidavits are filed with the original record of birth and the record is sealed. A new birth certificate is then issued, which supplants that previously issued for the child, and is the only birth certificate open to public inspection. In form and contents it is identical with a birth certificate issued to parents for the birth of a legitimate child.

*QUESTION: Can any person other than a doctor of medicine sign a birth certificate?*

ANSWER: The law provides that whoever was in attendance upon the birth of the child is required to

file a birth certificate. If a physician was in attendance, the duty of filing a birth certificate falls upon him. If no physician was in attendance the midwife or person acting as midwife shall file the birth certificate.

**QUESTION:** Does the law permit any person other than a doctor of medicine to sign a death certificate?

**ANSWER:** The death certificate may be signed by any individual who is licensed to practice a healing art under the laws of the State of California. If no physician was in attendance, or if the physician was continually absent from such attendance, if he was unable to state the cause of death, if the deceased person was killed or committed suicide, died as a result of an accident or under such circumstances as to afford a reasonable ground to suspect that the death was caused by the criminal act of another, then the certificate of death shall be made by the coroner. It is the duty of physicians, funeral directors, or other persons in charge of the body, to notify the coroner or other proper official of such death for investigation and certification.

**QUESTION:** Does the law require that the person in attendance upon the decedent shall file the death certificate?

**ANSWER:** Section 10401 of the Health and Safety Code states that the physician shall, within 15 hours after the death, deposit the certificate at the place of death or deliver it to the attending funeral director at his place of business or at the office of the physician. The attending funeral director is charged with the filing of the death certificate. He is unable to obtain a burial or removal permit until he has filed the death certificate with the local registrar of vital statistics.

**QUESTION:** How may the birth of a foundling, whose date of birth and parentage are unknown, be registered?

**ANSWER:** If an unknown child, less than one year of age is found, the fact shall be referred immediately to the local registrar. This report must show the sex and color of the child, date and place of finding, and the name of the person or institution with whom it is placed. The geographical location where the child is found is known as the legal place of birth and the date of birth, determined as nearly as possible, shall be stated on the certificate and shall be known as the legal date of birth. The permanent institution with which it is placed shall give the child a name and report it to the local registrar. The certificate of finding is sent to the State Bureau of Vital Statistics, together with other reports of birth. If the child is later identified and a certificate of birth found or obtained, the fact

must be reported to the State for endorsement upon the certificate of finding with citation to the certificate of birth.

**QUESTION:** Does the law require the registration of stillbirths in California?

**ANSWER:** A stillborn child shall be registered upon a certificate of stillbirth which must be filed with the local registrar in the same manner as that prescribed for a certificate of death. A certificate of stillbirth is not required, however, for a fetus that has not advanced to the fifth month of uterogestation.

**QUESTION:** May midwives sign certificates of stillbirth?

**ANSWER:** The law prohibits midwives from signing certificates of stillbirth. Such cases, and stillbirths occurring without attendance by either physician or midwife shall be treated as deaths without medical attendance, requiring the services of the coroner.

**QUESTION:** It has just been discovered that the birth of my child, which occurred more than a year ago, was not registered at the time. May it now be presented for registration?

**ANSWER:** If the birth was not registered in conformity with the provisions of law in effect at the time it occurred by filing of the proper certificate with the local registrar within a period of one year from the date of the event, any beneficially interested person may petition the superior court in the county within which the birth occurred for an order judicially establishing the fact of birth. It is possible, also, to secure the registration of the birth through the application of those sections of the code that pertain to delayed birth registration. The latter procedure is less expensive than the court procedure.

**QUESTION:** Must deaths and marriages be registered within one year of the date of the events?

**ANSWER:** The law provides that if either deaths or marriages were not registered within one year of the date of the event, registration can be secured only through filing a petition with the superior court for an order to judicially establish fact of death or marriage.

**QUESTION:** The law provides for the marriage of unmarried persons who have been living together without securing a marriage license. Can a certificate of marriage be obtained for filing, the same as for marriages that have been performed following licensure?

**ANSWER:** Affidavits and certificates covering common law marriages may be filed with county recorders

but there is no provision in the law for the registration of such marriages upon State forms, nor is there any provision for the filing of such marriage certificates with the State Bureau of Vital Statistics.

**QUESTION:** *Is it possible to move a dead body from the place of death to a crematory, without employing the services of an undertaker?*

**ANSWER:** Unless the death was due to a communicable disease, there is no provision in the State law that would prohibit the removal of a dead body without the employment of an undertaker. Some cities have local ordinances that prohibit the moving of dead bodies through city streets except in a closed container and in a covered vehicle.

**QUESTION:** *Is there any State law that would prohibit the fitting of a bathing suit or any garments that are worn next to the skin before purchase?*

**ANSWER:** There is no State law that would prohibit this practice. Many cities have ordinances that prohibit the return of articles that are commonly worn next to the skin after they have been removed from the store where they were purchased. It is possible that some cities in the State have local ordinances that are more restrictive but there is no State law whatsoever that covers this subject.

**QUESTION:** *Is there any way in which fleas may be controlled in a dwelling house? We are greatly bothered by these insects and have found no method by which they can be destroyed.*

**ANSWER:** Coal oil is very efficient in the destruction of fleas but, because of its nature, it can not be used successfully on rugs, carpets and fabrics. In flea infected houses, the larvae are generally found living in the cracks of the floor. If a thin coating of naphthalene flakes is spread on the floor and the room left tightly closed over night, the fleas can be easily and effectively destroyed. In the morning the naphthalene may be swept up, placed in a closed container and used again for the same purpose. The one objection that many people have to the use of naphthalene flakes lies in the fact that the odor, similar to moth balls, is objectionable to many people.

**QUESTION:** *I understand that the body of a person who has died of a transmissible disease is not a factor in the spread of such disease. Why, then, do health authorities insist upon private funerals for persons who have died of communicable diseases?*

**ANSWER:** The health officer has supervision over funeral services for individuals who have died of communicable diseases. In quarantinable diseases and in

those which require restriction of contacts, a public funeral service may be permitted only in those instances wherein the casket remains closed and after suitable investigation the health officer believes that the public is fully protected in that there is complete segregation of members of the family and contacts from the general public. The chief reason for holding private funerals of individuals who have died of the more serious communicable diseases lies in the fact that members of the family who have been in contact with the patient may be carriers of the disease and through their contact with the general public at a funeral might constitute factors in the further spread of the disease.

**QUESTION:** *Is hookworm disease present in California and what steps should be taken to prevent its contraction?*

**ANSWER:** Hookworm was found in some of the deep mines of California immediately preceding and following World War I. It was brought into the State by miners from certain foreign countries and by agricultural laborers from one of the islands in the West Indies. The disease in agricultural laborers was promptly brought under control through treatment of individual cases. In the deep mines where the disease was found there apparently exists some inhibitory factor that prevented the development of the parasite. No cases of hookworm disease have been reported in California for 25 years. Since the usual mode of transmission is through the skin, hookworm can be controlled easily through proper methods of sewage disposal and the application of ordinary rules of hygiene and sanitation.

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Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it; no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it. While it lies there, it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it \* \* \*. What, then, is the spirit of liberty? I can not define it; I can only tell you my own faith. The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which weighs their interests alongside its own without bias; the spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded; the spirit of liberty is the spirit of Him who, near two thousand years ago, taught mankind that lesson it has never learned, but has never quite forgotten: that there may be a kingdom where the least shall be heard and considered side by side with the greatest.—Judge Learned Hand.

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The richest soil, if uncultivated, produces the rankest weeds.—Plutarch.

## ONE OF EVERY TWELVE CHILDREN IN UNITED STATES TODAY IS ILLEGITIMATE

One out of every 12 children in the United States today is illegitimate, Halbert L. Dunn, M.D., Chief of the Vital Statistics Division, United States Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C., stated in the October issue of *Hygeia*. Although at the present time 32 States have attempted to deal with the illegitimacy problem in connection with birth certificates, he says, there has yet to be worked out a perfect solution to this problem.

"In 1942," Dr. Dunn stated, "The United States Bureau of the Census recorded 83,459 births as illegitimate. This represented approximately four babies of every 100 born. It is likely that this number of illegitimates does not begin to be a measure of the problem, since many doctors are loath to report the true facts. Some States prohibit the recording of illegitimacy by law. However, there are ways of estimating the facts. For instance, birth certificates which do not carry the name of the father usually indicate that the child is illegitimate. It is probably safe to estimate that the total number of illegitimate births is approximately twice as great as the number reported as such. One in each dozen born is illegitimate—one out of every 12 little tots in kindergarten!"

There are many who can not understand why the unfortunate who is illegitimate must suffer for it. They can not understand why the registrar sends to an illegitimate person a birth certificate revealing that fact. The answer to the problem is not an easy one. At the present time, 32 States have attempted to deal with the legitimacy problem either by legislation or by rules and regulations which are fashioned so as to require extraordinary care in handling the birth records of such children. In general, the laws of the several States have attempted to solve the problem either by setting up protected or sealed files for illegitimate birth records, by refusing to issue complete certifications for illegitimate births or by fabricating a new birth certificate for adopted or legitimatized children. Some States use a combination of all three methods. None of the various methods have worked out very satisfactorily.

"As long ago as 1935," Dr. Dunn stated, "in a report to the Vital Statistics Section of the American Public Health Association by a committee on the Registration of Births Out of Wedlock, a minority report pointed out the possible way around this difficulty—'Universal adoption by State bureaus of vital statistics of certification of birth for all ordinary social purposes for which proof of age is needed, on a form that shows merely the

person's name, sex and place and date of birth, with no reference to his parentage.'

"Nation-wide use of a short form certification containing name, birth date, birth place, sex and birth certificate number might go far toward solving the crazy quilt of tragedy which has blanketed the intelligent use of the birth certificate information. Whether a person was born legitimate or illegitimate, he would then receive only an abbreviated statement in lieu of a certificated copy of his birth certificate.

"However, it is recognized that for some purposes the facts of paternity must be known. For instance, paternity information would probably have to be released to Government agencies serving veterans so that they could authorize benefit payments to their dependents. Under what protection complete certifications of birth could be given for such purposes poses a real question as yet unanswered.

"Several elements are necessary for a lasting solution of the 'birth certificate problem.' In one way or another these must be incorporated into whatever plan emerges and is generally accepted.

"(1) Vital records, once they are officially registered, must not be altered or made to appear other than what they are. This is true not only of birth certificates but also of those for adoption, legitimization, change of name, marriage, divorce and death. Any other course leads to disaster, since if even 1 per cent of the records should be false it will throw doubt on the authenticity of the remaining 99 per cent. One counterfeit dollar bill in each hundred would be an analogous situation.

"(2) The very fact that birth certificates must not be altered—once they are officially registered—is the best reason they must be made accurate in the first place. Since it is difficult to protect the rights of an illegitimate child unless the true facts concerning his parents are known, the importance of properly registering all these facts in the first place is doubly emphasized.

"(3) Because the true facts must be placed on file in official hands, it is common sense that all such records must be protected against improper disclosure. Just who could and could not see them would have to be clearly specified. A short form of certification of birth for everyone would be one way in which disclosure could be avoided. Certification of the facts concerning parentage directly to such agencies as those involved with administering dependency allotments would be another.

"(4) Justified official amendments to the birth certificate as well as other vital records such as change of name, adoption and the like must be linked to the birth certificate of the individual. Without such linkage

there would be no way to avoid alterations in the original birth certificate.

"Of these various elements the weight of evidence at present would seem to indicate that the short form of birth certification is coming into widespread favor as the next sure cure. In theory, its general use looks as though it might hold out a real solution to the crazy quilt tragedy of the birth certificate. It would prove the facts concerning date and place of birth just as well as a complete certified copy. It would serve over 95 per cent of the needs of the public. This in turn would mean that the great majority of the people legitimately born would not need a complete certification of birth and that consequently the added protective devices necessary for the illegitimate would not be so apparent as they are now.

"However, the short form certification should not be considered as a cure-all. The reason for failure to find a solution in the past has been the lack of a well thought out plan. A cure can and must be found, but it will probably come only when a well balanced and carefully tested plan can be applied uniformly throughout all the States. If such a plan can be created and agreed on it will undoubtedly be followed by the uniform legislation and methodology required to implement it."

In California, no reference to illegitimacy appears upon the birth certificate form. Prior to 1915 this information was required, but due to public protest the question "legitimate or illegitimate" was removed from the form and has never been used since that year.

#### SMOKE ABATEMENT ENGINEER WANTED

The Los Angeles County Civil Service Commission has announced a Nation-wide open competitive examination for the position of Smoke and Fumes Abatement Engineer in the Los Angeles County Health Department. Applicants must be men under 55 years of age, who are graduates of an accredited college with a degree in chemical engineering and who have had five years of experience in the field of chemical engineering, of which at least one year has been in the field of smoke and fumes control. The position pays \$355 to \$440 a month.

Applications must be filed on or before November 7, 1944. Application forms may be obtained from the office of the Los Angeles County Civil Service Commission, 102 Hall of Records, Los Angeles 12.

No power is strong enough to be lasting if it labors under the weight of fear.—Cicero.

The greatest and perhaps the only perfect gift that we can give to the world is the gift of ourselves at our best, and that means not just the skill of our hands and the cunning of our brains, but our dreams, our finest resolutions and most solemn promises to ourselves.—Capt. W. N. Thomas, U. S. N.

#### MORBIDITY REPORT—SEPTEMBER, 1944

Reportable diseases	Week ending				Total cases	5-yr. median	Total cases
	9-9	9-16	9-23	9-30			
Amebiasis (Amoebic Dysentery)	2		2	1	5		67
Anthrax							10
Botulism							238
Chancroid	6	7	3	7	23		334
Chickenpox (Varicella)	124	134	175	144	577	326	29,431
Cholera, Asiatic							24
Coccidioidal granuloma					1		1
Conjunctivitis—acute infectious of the newborn (Ophthalmia Neonatorum)		1			1		27
Dengue							1
Diphtheria	6	21	15	26	68	61	864
Dysentery, bacillary	14	15	15	9	53		52
Encephalitis, infectious		1	3	1	5		19
Epidemic diarrhea of the newborn							1,184
Epilepsy	21	26	29	26	102		449
Food poisoning		1	12	1	14		14,051
German measles (Rubella)	45	43	39	41	168		19
Glanders							833
Gonococcus infection	324	452	522	508	1,806	1,453	14,889
Granuloma inguinale							26,576
Influenza, epidemic	4	6	10	13	33	51	10,900
Jaudice, infectious	3	3	21	33	60		262
Leprosy	1				1		6
Lymphogranuloma venereum (lymphopathia venereum, lymphogranuloma inguinale)	3	8	1	2	14		167
Malaria	1		7	1	9	16	96
Measles (Rubeola)	100	93	113	117	423	268	65,951
Meningitis, meningoocccic	13	16	11	9	49	3	3
Mumps (Parotitis)	146	188	173	216	723	561	3
Paratyphoid fever, A and B		3	1		4		41
Plague							1
Pneumonia, infectious	27	48	64	43	182	126	3,305
Poliomyelitis, acute anterior	12	27	9	20	68	57	305
Pestilacosis							3
Rabies, human		1					742
Rabies, animal	11	20	23	10	64	26	3
Relapsing fever			1	2	3		434
Rheumatic fever	6	14	10	9	39		32
Rocky Mountain spotted fever	60	69	80	109	318	255	7,582
Scarlet fever							2
Septic sore throat, epidemic						0	20
Smallpox (variola)							21,051
Syphilis	389	491	480	575	1,935	1,727	
Tetanus		2	1		3		47
Trachoma			2		2		66
Trichinosis	1				1		32
Tuberculosis, pulmonary	121	228	139	177	665	553	5,999
Tuberculosis, other forms	24	11	3	5	43	35	364
Tularemia							2
Typhoid fever	5	11	4	5	25	31	218
Typhus fever	4	4	1	2	11		24
Undulant fever (Brucellosis)	16	7	12	11	46	22	243
Whooping cough (Pertussis)	56	114	85	65	320	924	3,497
Yellow fever							
Totals					7,865		210,143

Note: Military cases, if any, not included.



